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Written Testimony of Diane Quarty
Before the Connecticut General Labor and Public Employees
Committee in Support of SB 986, February 24, 2011

Senator Prague, Representative Zaleski and members of the Labor Committee,

Thank you for the chance to speak to you today about my support for Senate Bill 986 An act concerning additional requirements for an employer's notice to dispute certain care deemed reasonable for an employee under the Worker's Compensation Act. My name is Diane Quarty and I am a Connecticut state worker who has worked as a custodian for the past 14 years and I have been an injured worker who has been denied medical treatment and prescriptions even when recommended by network doctors. I have experienced firsthand the inefficiency, pain, and stress of being denied medical treatment.

Due to understaffing it puts more stress on the workers who are on the job when an injured worker is put out of work, forced to wait for approvals for recommended medical treatment and doing job searches such as in my case. While some of my fellow workers who were injured were sitting home doing job searches while waiting for approvals that took months, I went from working in a 99,000 square foot area to a 209,000 square foot area after we moved to a new school. Some of these workers' positions were left empty and although we had more school to maintain we did not have extra workers. It would make a lot more sense to have those workers getting the treatment that their doctors prescribed so that they could recover and get back to work sooner.

I take a lot of pride in my work and, after the move, while scrubbing floors on my hands and knees I developed a stress fracture on top of my foot. On January 12, 2009, I sent in a Form 30c. My claim was denied although it was supported by my foot doctor. To make my job bearable so that I could continue to work, I had to pay out of pocket for special very expensive orthotic shoes. Eventually I had a hearing and thankfully the commissioner had the money returned to me. I am a single woman who has to pay bills. I cannot afford to be out of work. The inserts helped heal my foot and made it less painful to work so that I could continue to do the job that I was hired to do. It does not make sense that I was denied a prescribed treatment that ultimately helped me to do my job.

In the years that I have been employed to maintain state property and keep our children's schools clean, I have suffered repetitive motion injuries or have developed skin conditions because of some of the cleaning chemicals we have used. I and my employer, the state of Connecticut, cannot afford to not have my coworkers and me treated promptly, properly and as our doctors have prescribed so that we can continue to do our job. Please vote for SB 986 to insure that we injured workers receive the medical treatment that is mandated by the Workers Compensation Act.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Diane Quarty
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